

NPL Site Narrative for Bunker Hill Mining & Metallurgical

BUNKER HILL MINING & METALLURGICAL COMPLEX

Smelterville, Idaho

Federal Register Notice: [September 8, 1983](#)

Conditions at listing (December 1982): The Bunker Hill Mining & Metallurgical Complex covers 350 acres in Smelterville, Idaho. It smelted lead and zinc for 50 years. In 1981, the plant closed for economic reasons, and in 1982, Bunker Hill's parent company sold the operation to an Idaho consortium. Environmental problems associated with the Bunker Hill operations are of long standing, although there has been improvement in recent years. In 1982, significant numbers of Kokanee trout returned to the South Fork of the Coeur d'Alene River, which had been totally devoid of fish below Kellogg for many years. Improved conditions can be attributed to Bunker Hill's installation of treatment facilities for wastes that once were discharged untreated into the river. Because of elevated levels of lead in the blood of children around Kellogg, airborne lead was a cause for alarm in the early 1970s. Control measures subsequently taken by the company reduced lead-blood levels from what they were a decade ago.

Several factors contribute to continuing environmental concern, including: accumulations of lead in soil and dust around the complex, hazardous wastes in a storage pond on the property, residues of heavy metals in the South Fork of the Coeur

d'Alene, and heavy metals contamination in the aquifer downgradient of the site.

Status (July 1983): Economic considerations will determine if and when full-scale operations of the Bunker Hill complex resume. Environmental controls will be a factor in those considerations. EPA is preparing a Remedial Action Master Plan outlining the investigations needed to determine the full extent of cleanup required at the site. It will guide further actions at the site.

[The description of the site (release) is based on information available at the time the site was evaluated with the HRS. The description may change as additional information is gathered on the sources and extent of contamination. See [56 FR 5600](#), February 11, 1991, or subsequent FR notices.]